

Planning Zoning and Housing Committee
Of the RTM

Draft Meeting Minutes

Date: June 12, 2006

Place: Employee Lounge Town Hall

Present: Bayne, Conologue, Fingar, Magida, Rycenga, Sheehan, Sickinger, van der Kieft, Young

Absent: Grimes, Normile, Stark

Special Meeting of the Planning Zoning and Housing Committee of the RTM to discuss approval of lease between Callari/BMW and the Town of Darien.

Meeting was called to order at 6:35 PM.

Minutes of 5-2-06 were submitted and approved.

Guests in attendance were Evonne Klein, First Selectwoman; Wilder Gleason, attorney for Callari family; John Crary, Town Administrator; Cheryl Russell, Chairman of Parks and Recreation Committee; David Bayne, Chairman of Public Works Committee.

Callari/BMW Lease

Chairman introduced all guests and opened floor to questions regarding the lease agreement between the Callari Family (BMW) and the Town of Darien. Concerns were raised as to where certain organic materials which are currently being stored on this particular parcel of land will be moved. Ms. Klein stated that there are no permanent structures on the parcel and that the bins used by the Parks and Rec Dept. will be relocated by Bob Steeger and the Public Works Department. The Board of Selectmen was unaware that the land was being used as a storage area when they voted to approve the lease, but is confident that all materials as well as some Public Works vehicles will be properly stored elsewhere.

Concerns were also raised as to storm runoff. Apparently the Jaguar Dealership floods in heavy rains as the pond/stream in the Town Dump drains under I-95 towards Jaguar on the Post Road. Wilder Gleason stated that the parcel has never been scrutinized by EPC so runoff is on an undeveloped portion of property that has never been officially monitored by the Town. Gleason stated that the paving of this area will result in more optimal drainage into Cummings Pond via storm drains as well as a 100 year flood overflow catch basin that will be installed by Callari. In fact, it is their contention that the area will actually be better monitored and cared for environmentally than it is now. Additionally, Callari will be adding a silt/oil separator to manage the runoff. Many of these points had been raised in the letter PZH Committee presented to the Board of Selectmen in May. Callari will be spending \$200,000 in fees and costs to upgrade and manage the environmental issues associated with the paving of this area. Finally, Gleason pointed out that this is a 10 year lease which cannot be renewed – Callari and the Town of Darien would have to negotiate a new lease agreement – after which time the Town would have the property in an upgraded state. The current lease is priced at market rates and is in line with the cost of the current lease Callari has with Howard Johnsons. It was noted that the parcel of land is approximately 1/3 of an acre and will hold approximately 30 cars.

The EPC unanimously approved the Callari application as submitted at their meeting last week.

David Bayne stated that the Public Works Committee after much scrutinizing of the Lease Agreement approved the lease as well. They feel that economically and environmentally this lease made good sense.

Chairman Young wanted the following points raised:

1. Accessibility is not really an issue from Ledge Road. If the town needed to access this parcel they would be able to.
2. Most likely Callari will want to negotiate a new lease in 10 years therefore this will not be coming back to the Town.
3. Structured parking is allowed in certain circumstances and he wonders whether Callari ever considered this option. Gleason said no as the parking requirements per P&Z are very difficult to work with so they didn't bother.

Ms. Russell asked for clarification that the lease will terminate in 10 years which is indeed the case. If the dealership is sold to non family members at any time within the 10 year period, the lease will immediately terminate.

Ms. Russell wanted the following points noted:

1. She acknowledged that there was a miscommunication with the Town as to the material stored at the Dump.
2. Parks and Rec feels that there is no other place to store organic material other than the Town Dump, but she feels that the Public works Dept. will find a place. She raised concern as to whether another area of the Town Dump will continue to exist for 10 years as the facility continues to grow.
3. Finally, the Parks and Rec Committee feels that no land should be leased as there is very little land left in Darien.

John Crary pointed out that technically the organic materials stored at the Dump are not the property of the Parks and Rec Commission but rather are owned by the Town of Darien and that they will be stored safely in another location.

With no further questions or comments from the attendees, a motion was made and seconded to vote on the approval of item 06-17 (Consideration and action on leasing of Town land at the transfer station to Felix and Sylvia Callari) on the agenda of the June 12, 2006 Special Meeting of the Darien RTM:

Vote on Item 06-17

On June 12, 2006 in a special meeting of the Planning Zoning and Housing Committee of the RTM, with 9 of 12 members present, the Committee voted to approve a lease between the Town of Darien and Felix F. Callari and Sylvia S. Callari with a vote of 6 in favor and 3 opposed.

Meeting was adjourned at 7:45PM.

Respectfully Submitted,
Tamsin Sickinger
Clerk